

CHAPTER VI.

ZWINGLI AND

CALVIN.

SWITZERLAND may dispute with Germany the honour of being the native land of the Reformation. Ulrich Zwingli was a reformer as early as Martin Luther—was, in fact, attacking indulgences and other abuses from his pulpit at Einsiedeln in Schwyz at the same time that Luther was attacking them from his pulpit at Wittenberg in Saxony. He proclaimed his independence of Luther at a time when all the world was ringing with the name of the intrepid Saxon monk, and disclaimed the name of Lutheran. He admired Luther, but he was not his disciple, and differed from him in character, experience, and, in some essential respects, in doctrine. He became a reformer by the independent study of the Bible, and if he owned a master, it was not Luther, but Thomas Wyttenbach, his professor of theology at Basel University, who, he tells us, taught him to eschew indulgences, and "seek the remission of sins in the death of Christ alone and open the door to it by the key of faith." Erasmus, too, whose books, he further tells us, he read every night before going to bed? exercised a marked influence on the enthusiastic young humanist, who combined the study of the New Testament in the original Greek with that of the ancient authors. Unlike Luther, Zwingli was a Liberal in thought and creed before he became the declared antagonist of the Roman Church. He claimed intellectual and spiritual kinship with the great writers and thinkers of antiquity as well as with the prophets and apostles. The Spirit of God, he believed, spoke through them to the ancient world, and he felt the true humanist's delight in their writings. He is, in some respects, the finest spirit among the reformers. He did not, like Luther, narrow into the rigid theologian, but took an intelligent interest in the social and political welfare of his countrymen. His intol-